

The Special Relationship with India

Part 1: The Supremacy of the Indian National Congress

The Third World country on which the KGB eventually concentrated most operational effort during the Cold War was India. Under Stalin, however, India had been regarded as an imperialist puppet. The Great Soviet Encyclopedia dismissed Mohandas Mahatma* Gandhi, who led India to independence in 1947, as 'a reactionary....who betrayed the people and helped the imperialists against them; aped the ascetics; pretended in a demagogic way to be a supporter of Indian independence and an enemy of the British; and widely exploited religious prejudice'.¹ Despite his distaste for Stalinist attacks Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India, 'had no doubt that the Soviet revolution had advanced human society by a great leap and had lit a bright flame which could not be smothered'. Though later eulogized by Soviet writers as 'a leader of international magnitude who ranked' among the best minds of the twentieth century,² Nehru was well aware that until Stalin's death in 1953 he, like Gandhi, was regarded as a reactionary. During the early years of Indian independence, secret correspondence from Moscow to the Communist Party of India (CPI) was frequently intercepted by the Intelligence Branch (IB) in New Delhi (as it had been when the IB was working for the British Raj). According to the head of the IB, B. N. Mullik, until the early 1950s every instruction that had issued from Moscow had expressed the necessity and importance [for] the Indian Communist Party to overthrow the "reactionary"³ Nehru Government. Early in 1951 Mullik gave Nehru a copy of the latest exhortations from Moscow to the CPI, which contained a warning that they must not fall into government hands. Nehru laughed out loud and remarked that Moscow apparently did not know how smart our Intelligence was.⁴

312 (Page nos)

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA; PART I

Neither Nehru nor the IB, however, realized how thoroughly the Indian embassy in Moscow was being penetrated by the KGB, using its usual varieties of the honey trap. The Indian diplomat PROKHOR (code name given for the Indian by KGB) was recruited, probably in the early 1950s, with the help of a female swallow (a female Russian prostitute/spy), codenamed NEVEROVA, who presumably seduced him. The KGB was clearly pleased with the material which PROKHOR provided, which included on two occasions the embassy code-book and deciphering tables, since in 1954 it increased his monthly payments from 1,000 to 4,000 rupees. Another Indian diplomat, RADAR, was recruited in 1956, also with the assistance of a swallow, who on this occasion claimed (probably falsely) to be pregnant.⁶ A third KGB swallow persuaded a cipher clerk in the Indian embassy, ARTUR, to go heavily into debt in order to make it easier to compromise him. He was recruited as an agent in 1957 after being trapped (probably into illegal currency dealing) by a KGB officer posing as a black-marketeer.⁷ As a result of these and other penetrations of the embassy, Soviet code breakers were probably able to decrypt substantial numbers of Indian diplomatic communications.

As KGB operations in India expanded during the 1950s and 1960s, the Centre seems to have discovered the extent of the IB's previous penetration of the CPI. According to a KGB report, an investigation into Promode Das Gupta, who became

secretary of the Bengal Communist Party in 1959, concluded that he had been recruited by the IB in 1947.* Further significant IB penetrations were discovered in the Kerala and Madras parties.¹⁰ By the 1960s KGB penetration of the Indian intelligence community and other parts of its official bureaucracy had enabled it to turn the tables on the IB.¹¹ After the KGB became the main conduit for both money and secret communications from Moscow, high-level IB penetration of the CPI (Communist Party of India) became much more difficult. As in other Communist parties, this secret channel was known only to a small inner circle within the leadership. In 1959 the CPI General Secretary, Ajoy Ghosh, agreed with the Delhi residency on plans to fund an import-export business for trade with the Soviet bloc, headed by a senior Party member codenamed DED, whose profits would be creamed off for "party funds". Within little more than a decade its annual profits had grown to over 3 million rupees. The Soviet news agency Novosti provided further subsidies by routinely paying the CPI publishing House at a rate 50 per cent above its normal charges

313

ASIA

Moscow's interest in Nehru was greatly enhanced by his emergence (together with Nasser and Tito) as one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement, which began to take shape at the Bandung Conference in 1955. An exchange of official visits in the same year by Nehru and Khrushchev opened a new era in Indo-Soviet relations. On his return from India in December, Khrushchev reported to the Presidium that he had received a warm welcome, but criticized the 'primitive' portrayal of India in Soviet publications and films which demonstrated a poor grasp of Indian culture. Khrushchev was, however, clearly pleased with the intelligence and personal security provided by the KGB during his trip and proposed that the officers concerned be decorated and considered for salary increases

American reliance on Pakistan as a strategic counterweight to Soviet influence in Asia encouraged India to turn to the USSR. In 1956 Nehru declared that he had never encountered a 'grosser case of naked aggression' than the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt, but failed to condemn the brutal Soviet suppression of the Hungarian Uprising in the same year. India voted against a UN resolution calling for free elections in Hungary and the withdrawal of Soviet forces. The Kremlin increasingly valued Indian support as, with growing frequency, the Non-Aligned Movement tended to vote in the UN with the Soviet bloc rather than the West. During the 1960s India and the Soviet Union found further common cause against Mao's China.¹⁵

Within Nehru's Congress Party government the KGB set out to cultivate its leading left-wing firebrand and Nehru's close adviser, Krishna Menon, who became Minister of Defense in 1957 after spending most of the previous decade as, successively, Indian High Commissioner in London and representative at the United Nations. To the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, 'It was.....plain that [Menon] was personally friendly to the Soviet Union. He would say to me heatedly: "You cannot imagine the hatred the Indian people felt and stiff feel to the colonialists, the British..... The methods used by American capital to exploit the backward countries may be oblique, but they're just as harsh."¹⁶

In May 1962 the Soviet Presidium (which under Khrushchev replaced the Politburo) authorized the KGB residency in New Delhi to conduct active-measures operations designed to strengthen Menon's position in India and enhance his personal popularity,

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA: PART I

probably in the hope that he would become Nehru's successor.¹⁷ During Menon's tenure of the Defense Ministry, India's main source of arms imports switched from the West to the Soviet Union. The Indian decision in the summer of 1962 to purchase MiG-21s rather than British Lightnings was due chiefly to Menon. The British High Commissioner in New Delhi reported to London, "Krishna Menon has from the beginning managed to surround this question with almost conspiratorial official and ministerial secrecy combined with a skilful putting about of stories in favour of the MiG and against Western aircraft".¹⁸ Menon's career, however, was disrupted by the Chinese invasion of India in October 1961. Having failed to take the prospect of invasion seriously until the eve of the attack, Menon found himself made the scapegoat for Indians unpreparedness. Following the rout of Indian forces by the Chinese, Nehru reluctantly dismissed him on 31 October. A fortnight later, the Presidium authorized active measures by the Delhi residency, including secret finance for a newspaper which supported Menon, in a forlorn attempt to resuscitate his political career.¹⁹ Though similar active measures by the KGB in Menon's favour before the 1967 election²⁰ also had little observable effect, a secret message to Menon from the CPSU Central Committee (probably sent by its International Department) expressed appreciation for his positive attitude to the Soviet Union.²¹

KGB support did little to revive Menon's fortunes. Before he became Defense Minister, most of his political career had been spent outside India, including twenty eight years in Britain, where he had served for more than a decade as a Labour councilor in London. As a result, despite the personal support of some ardent disciples within the Congress Party (at least one of whom received substantial KGB funding)²² Menon lacked any real popular following in India itself. By the time he returned to India from foreign exile, the only language he spoke was English, he could no longer tolerate spicy Indian food and he preferred a tweed jacket and flannel trousers to traditional Indian dress. After failing to be nominated by Congress in his existing Bombay constituency for the 1967 election, Menon stood unsuccessfully as an independent. Two years later, with Communist support, he was elected as an independent in West Bengal. Some of the issues on which he campaigned suggest that he had been influenced by KGB active measures-as, for example, in his demand that American troops in Vietnam be tried for genocide and his claim

ASIA

that they were slitting open the wombs of pregnant women to expose their unborn babies.²³ Well before his death in 1974, however Menon had ceased to be an influential voice in Indian politics.

Following Menon's political eclipse, Moscow's preferred candidate to succeed Nehru after his death in May 1964, was Gulzarilal Nanda, Home Minister and number two in the cabinet. The Delhi residency was ordered to do all it could to further his candidature but to switch support to Lai Bahadur Shastri, also a close associate of Nehru, if Nanda's campaign failed.²⁴ There is no indication in the files noted by Mitrokhin that the KGB was in contact with either Nanda or Shastri. Moscow's main reason for supporting them was almost certainly, negative rather than positive-to prevent the right-wing Hindu traditionalist Morarji Desai, who began each day by drinking a glass of his

own urine (a practice extolled in ancient Indian medical treatises), from succeeding Nehru. In the event, after Desai had been persuaded to withdraw reluctantly from the contest, Shastri became Prime Minister with the unanimous backing of Congress. Following Shastri's sudden death in January 1966, the cabal of Congress leaders (the 'Syndicate') chose Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi (code named VANO by the KGB), as his successor in the mistaken belief that she would prove a popular figurehead whom they could manipulate at will.²⁵

The KGB's first prolonged contact with Indira Gandhi had occurred during her first visit to the Soviet Union a few months after Stalin's death in 1953. As well as keeping her under continuous surveillance, the Second Chief Directorate also surrounded her with handsome, attentive male admirers.²⁶ Unaware of the orchestration of her welcome by the KGB, Indira was overwhelmed by the attentions lavished on her. Though she did not mention the male admirers in letters to her father, she wrote to him, "Everybody- the Russians -have been so sweet to me... I am being treated like everybody's only daughter- I shall be horribly spoilt by the time I leave. Nobody has ever been so nice to me.' Indira wrote of a holiday arranged for her on the Black Sea, 'I don't think I have had such a holiday for years'. Later, in Leningrad, she told Nehru that she was 'wallowing in luxury. Two years later Indira accompanied her father on his first official visit to the Soviet Union. Like Nehru, she was visibly impressed by the apparent successes of Soviet planning and economic modernization exhibited to them in carefully stage-managed visits to Russian

316

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA: PART I

factories. During her trip, Khrushchev presented her with a mink coat which became one of the favorite items in her wardrobe -despite the fact that a few years earlier she had criticized the female Indian ambassador in Moscow for accepting a similar gift.²⁸

Soviet attempts to cultivate Indira Gandhi during the 1950s were motivated far more by the desire to influence her father than by any awareness of her own political potential. Like both the Congress Syndicate and the CPI, Moscow still underestimated her when she became Prime Minister. During her early appearances in parliament, Mrs. Gandhi seemed tongue-tied and unable to think on her feet. The insulting nickname coined by a socialist MP, 'Dumb Doll' began to stick.²⁹ Moscow's strategy during 1966 for the Indian elections in the following year was based on encouraging the CPI and the breakaway Communist Party of India, Marxist (CPM) to join together in a left-wing alliance to oppose Mrs. Gandhi and the Congress government.³⁰ As well as subsidizing the CPI and some other left-wing groups during the 1967 election campaign, the KGB also funded the campaigns of several agents and confidential contacts within Congress. The most senior agent identified in the files noted by Mitrokhin was a minister codenamed ABAD, who was regarded by the KGB as 'extremely influential'.³¹

During the election campaign, the KGB also made considerable use of active measures, many of them based on forged American documents produced by Service A. An agent in the information department of the US embassy in New Delhi, codenamed MIKHAIL, provided examples of documents and samples of signatures to assist in the production of convincing forgeries.³² Among the operations officers who publicized the forgeries produced for the 1967 election campaign was Yuri Modin, former controller of the Cambridge 'Magnificent Five'. In an attempt to discredit S. K. Patil, one of the leading anti-Communists in the Congress Syndicate, Modin circulated a forged letter from the US consul-general in Bombay to the American ambassador in New Delhi

referring to Patil's political intrigues with the Pakistanis' and to the large American subsidies supposedly given to him. Though Patil was one of the most senior Congress politicians defeated at the election, it remains difficult to assess how much his defeat owed to KGB active measures.³³ Modin also publicized a bogus telegram to London from the British High Commissioner, John Freeman, reporting

317

ASIA

that the United States was giving vast sums to right-wing parties and politicians. The fact that the KGB appears to have had no agent like MIKHAIL in the High Commission, however, led Service A on this occasion to make an embarrassing error. Its forgery mistakenly described the British High Commissioner as Sir John Freeman.³⁴

Other Service A fabrications had much greater success. Among them was a forged letter purporting to come from Gordon Goldstein of the US Office of Naval Research and revealing the existence of (in reality non-existent) American bacteriological warfare weapons in Vietnam and Thailand. Originally published in the Bombay 'Free Press Journal', the letter was reported in the London 'Times' on 7 March 1968 and used by Moscow Radio in broadcasts beamed at Asia as proof that the United States had spread epidemics in Vietnam. The Indian weekly 'Blitz' headlined a story based on the same forgery, 'US Admits Biological and Nuclear Warfare'. Goldstein's signature and official letterhead were subsequently discovered to have been copied from an invitation to an international scientific symposium circulated by him the previous year.³⁵

After the elections of February 1967, the KGB claimed, doubtless optimistically, that it was able to influence 30 to 40 per cent of the new parliament.³⁶ Congress lost 21 per cent of its seats. The conflict between Indira Gandhi and her chief rival Morarji Desai made its forty-four-seat majority precarious and obliged her to accept Desai as Deputy Prime Minister. By 1968 Desai and Kamaraj, the head of the Syndicate, were agreed on the need to replace Mrs. Gandhi.³⁷ Congress was moving inexorably towards a split.

During 1969 there were major policy reorientations in both Moscow and Delhi. The growing threat from China persuaded the Kremlin to make a special relationship with India the basis of its South Asian policy. Simultaneously, Mrs. Gandhi set out to secure left-wing support against the Syndicate. In July 1969 she nationalized fourteen commercial banks. Desai was sacked as Finance Minister and resigned as Deputy Prime Minister. Encouraged by Moscow, the CPI swung its support behind Mrs. Gandhi. By infiltrating its members and sympathizers into the left-wing Congress Forum for Socialist Action (codenamed SECTOR by the KGB), the CPI set out to gain a position of influence within the ruling party.³⁸ In November the Syndicate declared Mrs. Gandhi guilty of defiance of

318

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA: PART I

the Congress leadership and dismissed her from the party, which then split in two: Congress (O), which followed the Syndicate line, and Congress (R), which supported Mrs. Gandhi. The Syndicate hinted that Mrs. Gandhi intended to 'sell' India to the Soviet Union and was using her principal private secretary, Parmeshwar Narain Haksar,

as a direct link with Moscow and the Soviet embassy.³⁹

From 1967 to 1973 Haksar, a former protégé of Krishna Menon, was Mrs. Gandhi's most trusted adviser. One of her biographers, Katherine Frank, describes him as 'a magnetic figure' who became 'probably the most influential and powerful person in the government' as well as 'the most important civil servant in the country'. Haksar set out to turn a civil service which at least in principle, was politically neutral into an ideologically 'committed bureaucracy'. His was the hand that guided Mrs. Gandhi through her turn to the left, the nationalization of the banks and the split in the Congress Party. It was Haksar also who was behind the transfer of control of the intelligence community to the Prime Minister's Secretariat.⁴⁰ His advocacy of the leftward turn in Mrs. Gandhi's policies sprang, however, from his socialist convictions rather than from manipulation by the KGB. But both he and Mrs. Gandhi 'were less fastidious than Nehru had been about interfering with the democratic system and structure of government to attain their ideological ends.'⁴¹ The journalist Inder Malhotra noted the growth of a 'courtier culture' in Indira Gandhi's entourage: 'The power centre in the world's largest democracy was slowly turning into a durbar.'⁴²

At the elections of February 1971 Mrs. Gandhi won a landslide victory. With seventy seats more than the undivided Congress had won in 1967, her Congress (R) had a two-thirds majority. The Congress Forum for Socialist Action had the support of about 100 MPs in the new parliament. Mrs. Gandhi made its most vocal spokesman, the former Communist Mohan Kumaramangalam, Minister of Mines; one of his first acts was the nationalization of the coal industry. Kumaramangalam seemed to be implementing a 'thesis' which he had first argued in 1964: that since the CPI could not win power by itself, as many of its members and sympathizers as possible should join the Congress, make common cause with 'progressive' Congressmen and compel the party leadership to implement socialist policies.⁴³ Another leading figure in the Congress Forum for Socialist Action was recruited in 1971 as Agent RERO and paid about

319

ASIA

100,000 rupees a year for what the KGB considered important political intelligence as well as acting as an agent recruiter. His controllers included the future head of the FCD, Leonid Shebarshin (codenamed VERNOV).⁴⁴

In August 1971 Mrs. Gandhi signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation with the Soviet Union. According to the Permanent Secretary at the Indian Foreign Office, T.N. Kaul, it was one of the few closely guarded secret negotiations that India has ever conducted. On (the Indian) side, hardly half a dozen people were aware of it, including the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. The media got no scent of it.⁴⁵ A delighted Gromyko declared at the signing ceremony, 'The significance of the Treaty cannot be over-estimated.' Mrs. Gandhi's popularity among the Soviet people, he later claimed, was demonstrated by the large number of Soviet babies who were given the unusual name Indira.⁴⁵ The Soviet Union seemed to be guaranteed the support of the leading power in the Non-Aligned Movement. Both countries immediately issued a joint communiqué calling for the withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam. India was able to rely on Soviet arms supplies and diplomatic support in the conflict against Pakistan which was already in the offing. According to Leonid Shebarshin, who was posted to New Delhi as head of Line PR (political intelligence) at a time when 'Soviet military Technology was flowing into India in an endless stream', the Centre- unlike many in the Foreign Ministry -concluded that war was inevitable. Shebarshin realized that war had begun when the lights went out in the middle of a diplomatic reception at the Soviet embassy

on 2 December. Looking out of the window, Shebarshin saw that the power cut affected the whole of the capital. Leaving the embassy hurriedly, he drove to a phone box some way away to ring a member of the residency's agent network who confirmed that hostilities had started.⁴⁷ Another member of the network arranged a meeting between Shebarshin and a senior Indian military commander:

It would fit an understatement to say that the general's mood was optimistic. He knew precisely when and how the war would end: on 16 December with the surrender of Dacca [later renamed Dhaka] and capitulation of the Pakistani army [in East Pakistan] . . . They were in no state to resist and would not defend Dacca, because they had no one from whom to expect

320

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA: PART 1

help. "We know the Pakistani army, my interlocutor said, 'Any professional soldiers would behave the same way in their place.'⁴⁸

Despite diplomatic support from both the United States and China, Pakistan suffered a crushing defeat in the fourteen-day war with India. East Pakistan gained independence as Bangladesh, West Pakistan, reduced to a nation of only 55 million people, could no longer mount a credible challenge to India. For most Indians it was Mrs. Gandhi's finest hour. A Soviet diplomat at the United Nations exulted, 'This is the first time in history that the United States and China have been defeated together.'⁴⁹

In the Centre, the Indo-Soviet special relationship was also celebrated as a triumph for the KGB. The residency in New Delhi was rewarded by being upgraded to the status of 'main residency'. Its head from 1970 to 1975, Yakov Prokofyevich Medyanik, was accorded the title of 'main resident', while the heads of Lines PR (political intelligence), KR (counter-intelligence) and X (scientific and technological intelligence) were each given the rank of resident - not, as elsewhere, deputy resident. Medyanik also had overall supervision of three other residencies, located in the Soviet consulates at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. In the early 1970s, the KGB presence in India became one of the largest in the world outside the Soviet bloc, Indira Gandhi placed no limit on the number of Soviet diplomats and trade officials, thus allowing the KGB and GRU as many cover positions as they wished- Nor, like many other states, did India object to admitting Soviet intelligence officers who had been expelled by less hospitable regimes.⁵⁰ The expansion of KGB operations in the Indian subcontinent (and first and foremost in India) during the early 1970s led the FCD to create a new department. Hitherto operations in India, as in the rest of non-Communist South and South-East Asia, had been the responsibility of the Seventh Department. In 1974 the newly founded Seventeenth Department was given charge of the Indian subcontinent.⁵¹

Oleg Kalugin, who became head of FCD Directorate K (Counter-intelligence) in 1973, remembers India as 'a model of KGB infiltration of a Third World government': 'We had scores of sources throughout the Indian government - in intelligence, counter-intelligence, the Defense and Foreign Ministries, and the police.'⁵² In Directorate K, whose responsibilities included the penetration

311

ASIA

of foreign intelligence and security agencies, was running, through Line KR in the Indian

residencies, over thirty agents — ten of whom were Indian intelligence officers.⁵³ Kalugin recalls one occasion on which Andropov personally turned down an offer from an Indian minister to provide information in return for \$50,000 on the grounds that the KGB was already well supplied with material from the Indian Foreign and Defense Ministries. It seemed like the entire country was for sale; the KGB-and the CIA -had deeply penetrated the Indian government. After a while neither side entrusted sensitive information to the Indians, realizing their enemy would know all about it the next day.¹

The KGB, in Kalugin's view, was more successful than the CIA, partly because of its skill in exploiting the corruption which became endemic under Indira Gandhi's regime.⁵⁴ As Inder Malhotra noted, though corruption was not new in India.

People expected Indira Gandhi's party, committed to bringing socialism to the country, to be more honest and cleaner than the old undivided Congress, But this turned out to be a vain hope. On the contrary, compared with the amassing of wealth by some of her close associates, the misdeeds of the discarded Syndicate leaders once looked upon as godfathers of corrupt Congressmen, began to appear trivial.

Suitcases full of banknotes were said to be routinely taken to the Prime Minister's house. Former Syndicate member S. K. Patil is reported to have said that Mrs. Gandhi did not even return the suitcases.⁵⁵

The Prime Minister is unlikely to have paid close attention to the dubious origins of some of the funds which went into Congress's coffers. That was a matter which she left largely to her principal fundraiser, Lalit Narayan Mishra, who - though she doubtless did not realize it - also accepted Soviet money.⁵⁶ On at least one occasion a secret gift of 2 million rupees from the Politburo to Congress (R) was personally delivered after midnight by the head of Line PR in New Delhi, Leonid Shebarshin. Another million rupees were given on the same occasion to a newspaper which supported Mrs. Gandhi.⁵⁷ Short and obese with several chins, Mishra looked the part of the corrupt politician he increasingly became. Indira Gandhi, despite her own frugal lifestyle, depended on the money he collected from a variety

322

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA: PART I

of sources to finance Congress (R). So did her son and anointed heir, Sanjay, whose misguided ambition to build an Indian popular car and become India's Henry Ford depended on government favours. When Mishra was assassinated in 1975, Mrs. Gandhi blamed a plot involving 'foreign elements', a phrase which she doubtless intended as a euphemism for the CIA.⁵⁸ The New Delhi main residency gave his widow 70,000 rupees from its active-measures budget.⁵⁹ Though there were some complaints from the CPI leadership at the use of Soviet funds to support Mrs. Gandhi and Congress (R),⁶⁰ covert funding for the CPI seems to have been unaffected. By 1972 the import-export business founded by the CPI a decade earlier to trade with the Soviet Union had contributed more than 10 million rupees to Party funds. Other secret subsidies, totaling at least 1.5 million rupees, had gone to state Communist parties, individuals and media associated with the CPI.⁶¹ The funds which were sent from Moscow to Party headquarters via the KGB were larger still. In the first six months of 1975 alone they amounted to over 2.5 million rupees.⁶²

In the mid-1970s Soviet funds for the CPI were passed by operations officers of the New Delhi main residency to a senior member of the Party's National Council codenamed

BANKIR at a number of different locations. The simplest transfers of funds occurred when KGB officers under diplomatic cover had a pretext to visit BANKIR's office, such as his briefings for visiting press delegations from the Soviet bloc. Other arrangements, however, were much more complex- One file noted by Mitrokhin records a fishing expedition to a lake not far from Delhi arranged to provide cover for a transfer of funds to BANKIR. Shebarshin and two operations officers from the main residency left the embassy at 6.30 a.m., arrived at about 8 a.m. and spent two and a half hours fishing. At 10.30 a.m. they left the lake and headed to an agreed rendezvous point with BANKIR, making visual contact with his car at 11.15. As the residency car overtook his on a section of the road which could not be observed from either side, packages of banknotes were passed through the open window of BANKIR's car.⁶³ Rajeshwar Rao, general secretary of the CPI from 1964 to 1990, subsequently provided receipts for the sums received. Further substantial sums went to the Communist-Led All-India Congress of Trade Unions, headed by S. A. Dange.⁶⁴

323

ASIA

India under Indira Gandhi was also probably the arena for more KGB active measures than anywhere else in the world, though their significance appears to have been considerably exaggerated by the Centre, which overestimated its ability to manipulate Indian opinion. According to KGB files, by 1973 it had ten Indian newspapers on its payroll (which cannot be identified for legal reasons) as well as a press agency under its control.⁶⁵ During 1972 the KGB claimed to have planted 3,789 articles in Indian newspapers - probably more than in any other country in the non-Communist world. According to its files, the number fell to 2,760 in 1973 but rose to 4,486 in 1974 and 5,510 in 1975.⁶⁶ In some major NATO countries, despite active-measures campaigns, the KGB was able to plant little more than 1 per cent of the articles which it placed in the Indian press.⁶⁷

Among the KGB's leading confidential contacts in the press was one of India's most influential journalists, codenamed NOK, Recruited as a confidential contact in 1976 by A. A. Arkhipov, NOK was subsequently handled by two Line PR officers operating under journalistic cover: first A. I. Khaehaturian, officially a Trud correspondent, then V. N. Cherepakhin of the Novosti news agency. NOK's file records that he published material favorable to the Soviet Union and provided information on the entourage of Indira Gandhi. Contact with him ceased in 1980 as a result of his deteriorating health,⁶⁸ Though not apparently aware of the KGB's involvement in the active-measures campaign, P. N. Dhar believed that the left was 'manipulating the press . . . to keep Mrs. Gandhi committed to their ideological line'.⁶⁹ India was also one of the most favorable environments for Soviet front organizations. From 1966 to 1986 the head of the most important of them, the World Peace Council (WPC), was the Indian Communist Romesh Chandra. In his review of the 1960s at the WPC-sponsored World Peace Congress I, Chandra denounced 'the US-dominated NATO' as 'the greatest threat to peace' across the world.' The fangs of NATO can be felt in Asia and Africa as well [as Europe]... The forces of imperialism and exploitation, particularly NATO . . . bear the responsibility for the hunger and poverty of hundreds of millions all over the world.'⁷⁰

The KGB was also confident of its ability to organize mass demonstrations in Delhi and other major cities. In 1969, for example Andropov informed the Politburo, 'The KGB residency in India has

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA : PART I

the opportunity to organize a protest demonstration of up to 20,000 Muslims in front of the US embassy in India- The cost of the demonstration would be 5,000 rupees and would be covered in the . . . budget for special tasks in India. I request consideration. Brezhnev wrote 'Agreed' on Andropov's request.⁷¹ In April 1971, two months after Mrs. Gandhi's landslide election victory, the Politburo approved the establishment of a secret fund of 1.5 million convertible rubles (codenamed DEPO) to fund active-measures operations in India over the next four years.⁷² During that period KGB reports from New Delhi claimed on slender evidence, to have assisted the success of Congress (R) in elections to state assemblies.⁷³

Among the most time-consuming active measures implemented by Leonid Shebarshin as head of Line PR were the preparations for Brezhnev's state visit in 1973. As usual it was necessary to ensure that the General Secretary was received with what appeared to be rapturous enthusiasm and to concoct evidence that his platitudinous speeches were hailed as 'major political statements of tremendous importance.'⁷⁴ Since Brezhnev was probably the dreariest orator among the world's major statesmen this was no easy task, particularly when he traveled outside the Soviet bloc. Soviet audiences were used to listening respectfully to his long-winded utterances and to bursting into regular, unwarranted applause. Indian audiences, however, lacked the experience of their Soviet counterparts. Brezhnev would have been affronted by any suggestion that he deliver only a short address, since he believed in a direct correlation between the length of a speech and the prestige of the speaker. His open-air speech in the great square in front of Delhi's famous Red Fort, where Nehru had declared Indian independence twenty-six years earlier, thus presented a particular challenge. According to possibly inflated KGB estimates, 2 million people were present - perhaps the largest audience to whom Brezhnev had ever spoken. As Shebarshin later acknowledged, the speech was extraordinarily long winded and heavy going. The embassy had made matters even worse by translating the speech into a form of high Hindi which was incomprehensible to most of the audience. As the speech droned on and night began to fall, some of the audience started to drift away but, according to Shebarshin, were turned back by the police for fear of offending the Soviet leader. Though even Brezhnev sensed that not all was well, he was later reassured by the practiced sycophants in his entourage.

325

ASIA

Shebarshin was able to persuade both himself and the Centre that the visit as a whole had been a great success.⁷⁵ The KGB claimed much of the credit for 'creating favorable conditions' for Brezhnev's Indian triumph.⁷⁶

Leonid Shebarshin's perceived success in active measures as head of Line PR almost certainly helps to explain his promotion to the post of main resident in 1975 and launched him on a career which in 1988 took him to the leadership of the FCD. In a newspaper interview after his retirement from the KGB, Shebarshin spoke 'nostalgically about the old days, about disinformation - forging documents, creating sensations for the press'. It was doubtless his days in India which he had chiefly in mind.⁷⁷ Among the KGB's most successful active measures were those which claimed to expose CIA plots in the subcontinent. The Centre was probably right to claim the credit for persuading Indira Gandhi that the Agency was plotting her overthrow.⁷⁸ In November 1973 she told Fidel Castro at a banquet in New Delhi, "What they (the CIA) have done to Allende they

want to do to me also. There are people here, connected with the same foreign forces that acted in Chile, who would like to eliminate me.” She did not question Castro's (and the KGB's) insistence that Allende had been murdered in cold blood by Pinochet's US-backed troops. The belief that the Agency had marked her out for the same fate as Allende became something of an obsession. In an obvious reference to (accurate) American claims that, in reality, Allende had turned his gun on himself during the storming of his palace, Mrs. Gandhi declared, 'When I am murdered, they will say I arranged it myself.'⁷⁹

Mrs. Gandhi was also easily persuaded that the CIA, rather than the mistakes of her own administration, was responsible for the growing opposition to her government. Early in 1974 riots in Gujarat, which killed over 100 people, led to 8,000 arrests and caused the dissolution of the State Assembly, reinforced her belief in an American conspiracy against her.⁸⁰ Irritated by a series of speeches by Mrs. Gandhi denouncing the ever-present menace of CIA subversion, the US ambassador in New Delhi, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, ordered an investigation which uncovered two occasions during her father's premiership when the CIA had secretly provided funds to help the Communists' opponents in state elections, once in Kerala (money provided to the Christian church for the 'Vimochana Samaram'-my comment) and once in West Bengal- According to Moynihan:

326

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA : Exalt I

Both times the money was given to the Congress Party which had asked for it- Once it was given to Mrs. Gandhi herself, who was then a party official.

Still, as we were no longer giving any money to her it was understandable that she should wonder to whom we were giving it. It is not a practice to be encouraged.⁸¹

A brief visit to India by Henry Kissinger in October 1974 provided another opportunity for a KGB active-measures campaign. Agents of influence were given further fabricated stories about CIA conspiracies to report to the Prime Minister and other leading figures in the government and parliament. The KGB claimed to have planted over seventy stories in the Indian press condemning CIA subversion as well as initiating letter-writing and poster campaigns. The Delhi main residency claimed that, thanks to its campaign, Mrs. Gandhi had raised the question of CIA operations in India during her talks with Kissinger.⁸²

On 28 April 1975 Andropov approved a further Indian active-measures operation to publicize fabricated evidence of CIA subversion. Sixteen packets containing incriminating material prepared by Service A on three CIA officers stationed under diplomatic cover at the US embassy were sent anonymously by the Delhi residency to the media and gave rise to a series of articles in the Indian press. According to KGB files, Mrs. Gandhi sent a personal letter to the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, enclosing some of the KGB's forged CIA documents and a series of articles in Indian newspapers which had been taken in by them. The same files report that Mrs. Bandaranaike concluded that CIA subversion posed such a serious threat to Sri Lanka that she set up a committee of investigation.⁸³

One of Mrs. Gandhi's critics, Piloo Moody, ridiculed her obsession with CIA subversion by wearing around his neck a medallion with the slogan, 'I am a CIA agent'.⁸⁴ For Mrs. Gandhi, however, the Agency was no laughing matter. By the summer of

1975 her suspicions of a vast conspiracy by her political opponents, aided and abetted by the CIA, had, in the opinion of her biographer Katherine Frank, grown to 'something close to paranoia'. Her mood was further darkened on 12 June by a decision of the Allahabad High Court, against which she appealed, invalidating her election as MP

327

ASIA

on the grounds of irregularities in the 1971 elections. A fortnight later she persuaded both the President and the cabinet to agree to the declaration of a state of emergency. In a broadcast to the nation on India Radio on 26 June, Mrs. Gandhi declared that a 'deep and widespread conspiracy' had been brewing ever since 1 began to introduce certain progressive measures of benefit to the common man and woman of India'. Opposition leaders were jailed or put under house arrest and media censorship introduced. In the first year of the emergency, according to Amnesty International, more than 1,10,000 people were arrested and detained without trial.⁸⁵

Reports from the New Delhi main residency, headed from 1975 to 1977 by Leonid Shebarshin, claimed (probably greatly exaggerated) credit for using its agents of influence to persuade Mrs. Gandhi to declare the emergency.⁸⁶ The CPI Central Executive Committee voiced its 'firm opinion that the swift and stern measures taken by the Prime Minister and the government of India against the right-reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces were necessary and justified. Any weakness displayed at this critical moment would have been fatal. Predictably, it accused the CIA of supporting the counter-revolutionary conspiracy.⁸⁷ KGB active measures adopted the same line.⁸⁸ The assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and much of his family in Bangladesh on 14 August further fuelled Mrs. Gandhi's conspiracy theories. Behind their murders she saw once again the hidden hand of the CIA.⁸⁹

According to Shebarshin, both the Centre and the Soviet leadership found it difficult to grasp that the emergency had not turned Indira Gandhi into a dictator and that she still responded to public opinion and had to deal with opposition: "On the spot, from close up, the embassy and our [intelligence] service saw all this, but for Moscow "Indira became India, and India - Indira." Reports from the New Delhi residency which were critical of any aspect of her policies received a cool reception in the Centre. Shebarshin thought it unlikely that any were forwarded to Soviet leaders or the Central Committee. Though Mrs. Gandhi was fond of saying in private that states have no constant friends and enemies, only constant interests, "At times Moscow behaved as though India had given a pledge of love and loyalty to her Soviet friends. Even the slightest hiccup in relations caused consternation.⁹⁰ During 1975 a total of 10.6 million rubles was spent on active measures in India designed to strengthen

328

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA : PART I

support for Mrs. Gandhi and undermine her political opponents.⁹¹ Soviet backing was public as well as covert. In June 1976, at a time when Mrs. Gandhi suffered from semi-pariah status in most of the West, she was given a hero's welcome during a trip to the Soviet Union. On the eve of her arrival a selection of her speeches, articles and interviews was published in Russian translation.⁹² She attended meetings in her honour in cities across the Soviet Union.⁹³ The visit ended, as it had begun, in a mood of mutual

self-congratulation.

The Kremlin, however, was worried by reports of the dismissive attitude to the Soviet Union of Indira's son and anointed heir, Sanjay, an admirer of Ferdinand Marcos, the corrupt anti-Communist President of the Philippines.⁹⁴ Reports reached P. N. Dhar (and, almost certainly, the New Delhi main residency) that one of Sanjay's cronies was holding regular meetings with a US embassy official 'in a very suspicious manner'. Soon after his mother's return from her triumphal tour of the Soviet Union, Sanjay gave an interview in which he praised big business, denounced nationalization and poured scorn on the Communists. Probably annoyed by complaints of his own corruption, he said of the CPI, I don't think you'd find a richer or more corrupt people anywhere. By her own admission, Indira became 'quite frantic' when his comments were made public, telling Dhar that her son had 'grievously hurt' the CPI and 'created serious problems with the entire Soviet bloc. Sanjay was persuaded to issue a 'clarification' which fell well short of a retraction.⁹⁵

The emergency ended as suddenly as it had begun. On 18 January 1977 Mrs. Gandhi announced that elections would be held in March. Press censorship was suspended and opposition leaders released from house arrest. The New Delhi main residency, like Mrs. Gandhi, was overconfident about the outcome at the election. To ensure success it mounted a major operation, codenamed KASKAD, involving over 120 meetings with agents during the election campaign. Nine of the Congress (R) candidates at the elections were KGB agents.⁹⁶ Files noted by Mitrokhin also identify by name twenty-one of the non-Communist politicians (four of them ministers) whose election campaigns were subsidized by the KGB.⁹⁷ The Soviet media called for 'unity of action of all the democratic forces and particularly the ruling Indian National Congress and the Communist Party of India.⁹⁸ Repeated pressure was put on the CPI leadership by both New Delhi main residency and Moscow to ensure its support

329

ASIA

for Mrs. Gandhi. The CPI General Secretary, Rajeshwar Rao, and the Secretary of the Party's National Council, N. K. Krishna, were summoned to the Soviet embassy on 12 February to receive a message of exhortation from the CPSU Central Committee. Further exhortations were delivered in person on 15 February by a three-man Soviet delegation. KGB files report Rao and Krishna as saying that they greatly appreciated the advice of their Soviet colleagues and were steadfast in their support for Mrs. Gandhi.⁹⁹ Their appreciation also reflected the unusually high level of Soviet subsidies during the CPI election campaign-over 3 million rupees in the first two months of 1977.¹⁰⁰

Agent reports reinforced the New Delhi main residency's confidence that Indira Gandhi would secure another election victory. Reports that she faced the possibility of defeat in her constituency were largely disregarded.¹⁰¹ In the event Mrs. Gandhi suffered a crushing defeat, Janata, the newly united non-Communist opposition, won 40 per cent of the vote to Congress (R)'s 35 per cent. One of the KGB's *betes noires*, Morarji Desai, became Prime Minister. When the election result was announced, writes Mrs. Gandhi's biographer, Katherine Frank, 'India rejoiced as it had not done since the eve of independence from the British thirty years before. In Delhi, Mrs. Gandhi's downfall was celebrated with dancing in the streets.'¹⁰²

330

The Special Relationship with India Part 2; The Decline and Fall of Congress

The result of the Indian elections of March 1977 caused shock and consternation in both the Centre and the New Delhi main residency. Leonid Shebarshin, the main resident, was hurriedly recalled to Moscow for consultations.' As well as fearing the political consequence of Mrs. Gandhi's defeat, the Centre was also embarrassed by the way the election demonstrated to the Soviet leadership the limitations of its much-vaunted active-measures campaigns and its supposed ability to manipulate Indian politics. The FCD report on its intelligence failure was largely an exercise in self-justification. It stressed that an election victory by Mrs. Gandhi had also been widely predicted by both Western and Indian observers (including the Indian intelligence community), many of whom had made even greater errors than itself. The report went on to explain the FCD's own mistakes by claiming that the extreme diversity of the huge Indian electorate and the many divisions along family, caste, ethnic, religious, class and party lines made accurate prediction of voting behavior almost impossible. This was plainly special pleading. The Complexities of Indian politics could not provide a credible explanation for the failure by the KGB (and other observers) to comprehend the collapse of support for Mrs. Gandhi in the entire Hindi belt, the traditional Congress stronghold, where it won only two seats, and its reduction to a regional party of South India, where it remained in control.

The FCD also argued, in its own defense, that Mrs. Gandhi's previous determination to hold on to power had made it reasonable to expect that she would refuse to surrender it in March 1977, and would be prepared if necessary either to fix the election results or to declare them null and void (as, it alleged, Sanjay's cronies were urging). Indeed the FCD claimed that on 20 March, when the results

331

ASIA

were announced, Mrs. Gandhi had tried to prevent the Janata Party taking power but had been insufficiently decisive and failed to get the backing of the army high command. There was no substance to these claims, which probably originated in the Delhi rumour mill then working overtime, and were passed on to the KGB by its large network of agents and confidential contacts. Contrary to reports to Moscow from the New Delhi main residency, the transfer of power after the election was swift and orderly. In the early hours of 21 March Mrs. Gandhi summoned a short and perfunctory cabinet meeting, where she read out her letter of resignation, which was approved by the cabinet with only minor changes. At 4 am, she was driven to the home of the acting President, B. D. Jatti, and submitted her resignation. Jatti was so taken aback that, until prompted by Dhar, he forgot to ask Mrs. Gandhi to stay on as acting Prime Minister until the formation of the next government.

The tone of the Soviet media changed immediately after the Indian election. It blamed the defeat of Mrs. Gandhi, hitherto virtually free from public criticism, on 'mistakes and excesses' by her government. Seeking to exempt the CPI from blame, a commentator in Izvestia claimed, 'It is indicative that Congress Party candidates were most successful in places where a pre-election arrangement existed between the Congress and the Communist Party of India, or where the Communist Party, with no official encouragement, actively supported progressive candidates of the Congress Party'. In

reality the election was a disaster for the CPI as well as for Congress. Dragged down by the unpopularity of the Indira Gandhi regime, it lost all but seven of the twenty-five seats it had won in 1971, while its rival, the breakaway Communist Party of India, Marxist (CPM), won twenty-two. The Centre responded cautiously to the landslide victory of a CPM-led coalition in state elections in West Bengal in June 1977. Though Andropov was eager to set up covert communications with the new state government, he was anxious not to offend the CPI. It was therefore agreed after discussions between Shebarshin (recently promoted to become deputy head of the FCD Seventeenth Department) and a senior CPSU official that, though KGB officers could make contact with CPM leaders, they must claim to be doing so on a purely personal basis. According to FCD files, 'important information' about CPM policy was obtained by the Delhi main residency from its contacts with Party leaders.

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The KGB's main priority during the early months of the Janata government was damage limitation. In the course of the campaign Morarji Desai had charged Mrs. Gandhi with doing 'whatever the Soviet Union does' and declared that, under a Janata government, the Indo-Soviet treaty might 'automatically go'.

The Centre feared ⁴a reinforcement of reactionary anti-Soviet forces'.⁶ On 24 March the Politburo approved an FCD directive 'On measures in connection with the results of the parliamentary elections in India*, whose main objectives were to preserve the Friendship Treaty and to deter Janata from seeking a rapprochement with the United States and China.⁷ Though the Desai government did set out to

improve relations with the United States and China, the Indo-Soviet treaty survived. A joint communiqué after a visit by Gromyko to New Delhi in April committed both countries to 'the further strengthening of equal and mutually beneficial co-operation in the spirit of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation'. In August the Politburo approved a directive on KGB

active measures entitled 'On measures to influence the ruling circles of India in new conditions to the advantage of the USSR'.⁹

The 'new conditions' of Janata rule made active-measures campaigns more difficult than before.

Articles planted by the KGB in the Indian press declined sharply from 1,980 in 1976 to 411 in 1977.^m

The Centre, however, continued to make exaggerated claims for the

success of its active measures in making the Janata government suspicious of American and Chinese policy.

¹¹ The New Delhi main residency also claimed in June 1978 that it had succeeded in discrediting the Home Minister, Charan Singh, Indira Gandhi's most outspoken opponent in the Janata government, and forcing his dismissal.

¹² In reality, Singh's dismissal was due to the fact that he had accused Desai

and other ministers of being 'a collection of impotent men' because of their failure to bring Mrs. Gandh i to trial.¹¹ He was later to return to the government and briefly succeeded Desai as Prime Minister in the later months of 1979.

The March 1977 KGB directive approved by the Politbu ro had instructed the Delhi main residency to 'influence Mrs. Gandhi to renew the Indian

National Congress on a democratic (left-wing] basis'. In order not to offend the Janata government, the Soviet embassy was wary of maintaining official contact with Mrs. Gandh i after her election defeat.¹⁴

Instead , the Delhi main residency re-established covert

333

ASIA

contact with her through an operations officer, Viktor Nikola yevicli Chere pakhin (codenamed VLAD I.EN), operating

under cover as a Trud correspondent, though there is no evidence that she realized he was from the KGB. The residency also set up an active-measures fund codenamed DEPO in an attempt to buy influence within the Committee for Democratic Action founded by Mrs. Gandhi and some of her supporters in May 1977. Though there is no evidence that Mrs. Gandhi knew of its existence, the fund

had available in July 275,000 convertible rubles.¹ On New Year's Day 1978 Mrs. Gandhi instigated a second split in the Congress Party. She and her followers, the majority of the party, reconstituted themselves as Congress (I) - I for Indira. Though she eventually admitted that things 'did get a little out of hand' during the emergency, she continued to insist that Janata's election victory

owed much to 'foreign help'. The movement against us, she declared, 'was engineered by outside forces'.¹⁰ As usual, Mrs. Gandhi i doubtless had the CIA in mind.

Janata's fragile unity, which had been made possible during the 1977 election campaign only by common hostility to Indira Gandhi, failed to survive the experience of government. At the general elec-

tion in January 1980 Congress (I) won 351 of the 542 seats. 'It's Indira All The Way', declared the headline in the 'Times of India'. Soon after her election victory, Mrs. Gandhi tried to renew contact with Cherepakhin, only to discover that he had been recalled to Moscow.¹⁷ While welcoming Mrs. Gandhi's return to power, the Centre was apprehensive about the future. The power of Sanjay whom it

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Sharma, a member of the Parry Politburo who disagreed with Rajeshwar Rao's opposition to Mrs. Gandhi. Once in Moscow, however Sharma had second thoughts and 'confessed all' to a Party comrade. When the story was made public in India, Indira's critics accused her of 'inviting Soviet interference in India's internal affairs'. Mrs. Gandhi refused to comment.²² Though

somewhat tarnished, however, the Indo-Soviet special relationship survived. When Mrs. Gandhi visited Moscow for Brezhnev's funeral she was the first non-Communist leader to be received by Yuri Andropov.²³

The KGB continued to make large claims for the success of its active measures. When the Indian government refused in July 1981 to give an entry visa to an American diplomat named Griffin

, who was due to take up a post as political counsellor at the US embassy, the KGB claimed that the decision was due to its successes over the previous six months in linking him with the CIA. Vladimir Kryuchkov, the head of the FCD, reported to the Politburo.

According to information received, the initiative in making this decision came from Indira Gandhi herself. A significant role was also

played by
335
ASIA
anti-American articles which we inspired in the Indian and foreign press which cited various sources to expose the dangerous nature of the CIA's subversive operations in India. Attempts by representatives of the USA and of the American press to justify the methods and to pretend that Griffin had been the victim of a Soviet 'disinformation' campaign were decisively rejected by the

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Narasimha Rao, who stated that this action was taken independently and was in no way prompted by another country.

24

The greatest successes of Soviet active measures in India remained the exploitation of the susceptibility of Indira Gandhi and her advisers to bogus CIA conspiracies against them. In March 1980 Home Minister Zail Singh blamed the USA and China for foment

ing unrest in Assam and the tribal areas of the north-east. Shortly afterwards Home Minister Yashwantrao Chavan claimed to have 'definite information' that the CIA was 'pumping money' into the region through Christian missionaries. Mrs. Gandhi herself repeatedly referred to the 'foreign hand' behind this and other outbreaks of domestic unrest. Though she rarely identified the 'foreign

n hand' in public, it was clear that she meant the CIA.¹⁵

One of the main aims of KGB active measures in the early 1980s was to manufacture evidence that the CIA and Pakistani intelligence were behind the growth of Sikh separatism in the Punjab.²⁶ In the autumn of 1981 Service A launched operation KONTAKT based on a forged document purporting to contain details of the weapo

ns and money provided by Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to the militants seeking to bring about the creation of an independent Sikh state of Khalistan. In November the forgery was passed to a senior Indian diplomat in Islamabad. Shortly afterwards the Islamabad residency reported to the Centre that, according to (possibly optimistic) agents' reports, the level of anxiety in the Indian embas

sy about Pakistani support for Sikh separatists indicated that KONTAKT was having the alarmist effect that Service A had hoped for.

In the spring of 1982 the New Delhi residency reported that Agent "S" (apparently a recent recruit) had direct access to Mrs. Gandhi and had personally presented to her another forged ISI document fabricated by Service A, which purported to

demonstrate Pakistani involvement in the Khalistan conspiracy.²⁷ Though there is no convincing evidence that Agent 'S' or the forgeries channelled through

336

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA: PART 2

him had any significant influence on Mrs. Gandhi, the Centre succumbed to one of its recurrent bouts of wishful thinking about

its ability to manipulate Indian policy. On 5 May it congratulated the recently installed main resident, Alcks andr losifovich Lysenko (code named BOG DAN), on the supposed success of Agent' S'²⁸ and informed him that the Centre proposed to use 'S' as a major channel for feeding future disinformation to Mrs. Gandhi. Before the agent's meeting with

Mrs. Gandhi, the Centre sent the following detailed instructions:

(A)
(B)(A) During meetings [with 'S'], acquaint the agent with the contents of the [latest forged] document and show interest in his opinion regarding the importance and relevance of the information contained in it for the Indian authorities. Also it should be explained to the agent that the document is genuine, obtained by us through secret channels.

(C)
(D)(B) Work out a derailed story of how 'S' obtained the document. (This will involve organizing a short trip to Pakistan for the agent.)

(E)
(F)(C) Inform 'S' that, in accordance with the

terms laid down by the source [of the document] he must not leave the document with VANO [Mrs. Gandhi]-Recommended to the agent that he acts in the following way in order not to arouse a negative reaction in VANO, If VANO insists that the document is left with her, then 'S' should leave a previously prepared copy of the document, without the headings which would indicate its origin. Instruct 'S' to observe VANO's reaction to the document. (G) (H)(D) Point out to the agent that it is essential that he builds on his conversation with VANO in order that he can drop hints on what she can expect from 'S' in the future and what information would be of special interest to her.

'S' reported that he had shown the document to Mrs. Gandhi on May 1982. The fact that she did not ask for a copy suggests that she did not attach much significance to it. The KGB, however, preferred to credit the self-serving claims made by 'S' about his supposed influence on the Prime Minister.²⁹

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ASIA

of Khalistan as an independent Sikh state. The Centre believed that the Indian ambassador in Pakistan, to whom this forgery was sent would consider it so important that he was bound to forward it to Mrs. Gandhi,³⁰ The KGB appeared by now supremely confident that it could continue to deceive her indefinitely with fabricated reports of CIA and Pakistani conspiracies against her.

Mrs. Gandhi's importance as one of the Third World's most influential leaders was further enhanced, in Moscow's eyes, by her election as Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement in succession to Fidel Castro. The Indian press published photographs of a beaming Castro embracing her in a bear hug as he handed over to her in March 1983 at the seventh summit of the Movement in Delhi. On the eve of the summit the Delhi main residency succeeded in planting in the Indian press a forged secret memorandum in the name of the US representative at the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick, which gave further bogus details of American plans to foster divisions in the Third World and undermine Indian influence.¹¹ Under Mrs. Gandhi's chairmanship, the Non-Aligned summit devoted little time to the war in Afghanistan and concentrated instead on issues of disarmament and economic development, which offered ample scope for attacks on the United States. The post-summit communiqué condemned the United States fifteen times; the Soviet Union, by contrast, was only once bracketed with the United States as sharing responsibility for the arms race. Moscow was predictably delighted. Pravda declared that 'the Non-Aligned Movement has displayed devotion to its basic principles of struggle against imperialism, colonialism, racism and war'.³²

The next stage in the Soviet cultivation of the Gandhi dynasty was the visit to Moscow in July 1983 by Indira's elder son, Rajiv, who had reluctantly entered politics at his mother's insistence after Sanjay's death and was being groomed by her for the succession. The high-level meetings and glittering receptions laid on for Rajiv showed, according to one Indian observer, that he had been 'virtually anointed by the Soviet commissars as the unquestioned successor to Mrs. Gandhi'. During his visit Rajiv was plainly persuaded by his hosts that the CIA was engaged in serious subversion in the Punjab, where Sikh separatism now posed the most serious challenge to Congress government. He declared on his return that there 'definite interference from the USA in the Punjab situation'.³³

338

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA: PART 2

In early June 1984 Mrs. Gandhi sent troops into the Punjab where they stormed the Sikh holy of holies, the Golden Temple at Amritsar. The Soviet Union, like the CPI, quickly expressed 'full understanding of the steps taken by the Indian government to curb terrorism'. Once again, Mrs. Gandhi took seriously Soviet claims of secret CIA support for the Sikhs.³⁴ A KGB active measure also fabricated evidence that Pakistani intelligence was planning to recruit Afghan refugees to assassinate her.³⁵ Though Mrs. Gandhi, thanks largely to the KGB, exaggerated the threat from the

United States and Pakistan, she tragically underestimated the threat from the Sikhs in her own bodyguard, countermanding as a matter of principle an order from the head of the IB that they be transferred to other duties. India, she bravely insisted, 'was secular'. One of the principles by which she had lived was soon to cost her, her life. On 31 October she was shot dead by two Sikh guards in the garden of her house.³⁶ Predictably, some conspiracy theorists were later to argue that the guards had been working for the CIA.³⁷ Though the Centre probably did not originate this conspiracy theory, attempting to implicate the Agency in the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi became one of the chief priorities of KGB active measures in India over the next few years.³⁸

Rajiv Gandhi's first foreign visit after succeeding his mother as Prime Minister was to the Soviet Union for the funeral of Konstantin Chernenko in March 1985. He and Chernenko's successor, Mikhail Gorbachev, established an immediate rapport, which was reinforced during Rajiv's first official visit two months later. The KGB, meanwhile, pursued active-measures operations designed to persuade Rajiv that the CIA was plotting against him. Its fabrications, however, which included a forged letter in 1987 from the DCI, William Casey, on plans for his overthrow,³⁴ seem to have had little effect. The personal friendship between Rajiv and Gorbachev could not disguise the declining importance of the Indian special relationship for the Soviet Union. Part of Gorbachev's 'new thinking' in foreign policy was the attempt to extricate the Soviet Union from India's disputes with China and Pakistan. At a press conference during his visit to India in November 1986, Gorbachev was much more equivocal than his predecessors about Soviet support in a military conflict between India and China. The winding down of the cold war also greatly decreased the usefulness of India as an arena for KGB active measures. One of the

339

ASIA

most successful active measures during Gorbachev's first two years in power were the attempt to blame Aids on American biological warfare. The story originated on US Independence Day 1984 in an article published in the Indian newspaper Patriot, alleging that the Aids virus had been 'manufactured' during genetic engineering experiments at Fort Derrick, Maryland. In the first six months of 1987 alone the story received major media coverage in over forty Third World countries. Faced with American protests and the denunciation of the story by the international scientific community, however, Gorbachev and his advisers were clearly concerned that exposure of Soviet disinformation might damage the new Soviet image in the West. In August 1987 US officials were told in Moscow that the Aids story was officially disowned. Soviet press coverage of the story came to an almost complete halt.⁴¹ In the era of glasnost, Moscow also regarded the front organizations as a rapidly declining asset. In 1986 Romesh Chandra, the Indian Communist President of the most important of them, the World Peace Council, felt obliged to indulge in self-criticism. 'The criticisms made of the President's work', he acknowledged, 'require to be heeded and necessary corrections made.' The main "correction" which followed was his own replacement.⁴²

Rajiv Gandhi lost power in India at elections late in 1989 just as the Soviet bloc was beginning to disintegrate. New Delhi was wrong-footed by the final collapse of the Soviet Union two years later. On the outbreak of the hard-line coup in Moscow of August 1991 which attempted to overthrow Gorbachev, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao declared that it might serve as a warning to those who attempted change too rapidly. Following the collapse of the coup a few days later, Rao's statement was held against him by both Gorbachev and Yeltsin. When Gorbachev rang world leaders after his release from house arrest in the Crimea, he made no attempt to contact Rao. The Indian ambassador did not attend the briefing given by Yeltsin to senior members of the Moscow diplomatic corps after the coup collapsed.⁴³ The Indo-Soviet special relationship, to which the KGB had devoted so much of its energies for most of the Cold War, was at an end.

340

Demand for Commission of Inquiry to expose KGB agents in India

To: President of India

The President of India
Rashtrapati Bhawan
New Delhi

Sir,

As concerned Indian citizens, we invite your attention to the reports in the media about the Mitrokhin archives and the Benediktov diary. If the revelations reported therein are correct, then we believe very grave issues have arisen in regard to our national security.

It appears that from the time of Shri JL Nehru, many amongst our leaders (especially from the Congress and communist parties) as well as a leading section of the media, have been on the KGB payroll - and there is reason to believe the KGB continues to maintain its links with our leadership. Indeed, during Smt Indira Gandhi's prime ministership, it is alleged that, in KGB words, "it seemed like the entire country was for sale" (quoted In India Today, Oct 3, 2005) and the Soviets "virtually ran India's foreign, economic and defence policies"

(http://dailypioneer.com/columnist1.asp?main_variable=Columnist&file_name=siddharth%2Fsiddharth136%2Etxt&writer=siddharth).

There is also the report that Dr Yevgenia Albats, a Russian scholar at Harvard University, in her book "The State Within A State - The KGB and Its Hold on Russia", revealed that Soviet trading companies were making payments to a firm controlled by Shri Rajiv

Gandhi as far back as 1982, and that the Swiss newsmagazine Schweizer Illustrierte, citing KGB archives, reported in November 1991 that Smt Sonia Gandhi was controlling in her son's name a secret account worth 2.5 billion Swiss francs.

Moreover, Shri Rahul Gandhi, in 2001 on a private visit to the USA, reportedly was detained by the FBI at Boston airport for not being able to explain the USD 200,000 he was carrying with him into their country. He was released on the intervention of our country's national security advisor (<http://in.news.yahoo.com/050308/43/2k1rd.html> and http://www.asiantribune.com/show_news.php?id=10397). Why our country's national security advisor should intervene to rescue from the American police someone apparently smuggling into the USA the current equivalent of about a crore of rupees itself demands an enquiry.

Smt Sonia Gandhi heads the National Advisory Council and has access to all government records. Her son Shri Rahul Gandhi is an MP and publicly stated he could have been prime minister had he wanted to be (Tehelka, Sept 24, 2005).

The Mitrokhin/Benediktov/Albats/Schweizer Illustrierte reports are so specific, the circumstantial evidence prima facie so persuasive and the implications for our country so explosive that we join the demand already publicly raised in regard especially to the following issues:

1. The Mitrokhin Archives Volume II (Vol. I had revealed KGB agents in the West, who were later tried and convicted by courts of law) vindicates a demand for investigation of KGB links of Smt Sonia Gandhi and her son Shri Rahul Gandhi, and also of the KGB nexus with the Congress and communist parties in general.

2. Smt Sonia Gandhi's Italian family reportedly has a long-term connection with the KGB. Smt Gandhi's father Stefano Maino was recruited by the KGB while he was a prisoner in Vladimir, near St. Petersburg, Russia. He had earlier been a soldier in Hitler's Nazi Army which had invaded Russia in 1941, and had surrendered to Soviet troops.

3. The present Russian Ambassador in India was the KGB Station Chief in Delhi during the 1970s and since Smt Sonia Gandhi is the NAC Chairperson, therefore this has serious national security implications.

4. Besides the treachery to our country through being on the KGB payroll, there is also the serious national security question of whether policies were being altered at KGB behest. The following, therefore, are questions before our country:

- (i) Was Netaji in the USSR, and was he killed by the KGB to alter Indian politics?

- (ii) Was Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri killed in Tashkent to enable a more pro-Soviet Smt

Indira Gandhi to power?

(iii) Was Smt Indira Gandhi prevented by KGB blackmail from allowing the Indian Army to smash West Pakistan?

(iv) Did the KGB finance the 1979 Janata Party split?

(v) Did the KGB induce Operation Bluestar?

(vi) Did the KGB finance LTTE ideologue Balasingham, and hence is there a KGB link in Shri Rajiv Gandhi's assassination since Smt Sonia Gandhi is the beneficiary?

The Mitrokhin/Benediktov revelations are of post-Independence leaders and describe widespread treachery on a national scale. If true, they are of the utmost consequence to our national security.

As Indian citizens, we demand the highest-level inquiry into the veracity of these allegations.

Given the apparent spread of the poison, we want that the investigation should be under the direct, open and independent supervision of the Chief Justice of India, and any government employee the CJI associates with the investigation should be guaranteed full security of service or, in the alternative, the option of voluntary retirement but with full pension benefits.

The CJI should report his findings directly to you who then, without referring it to the central government (that is itself now suspect), must place it before the citizens of India with such prescription that you, as our President, consider appropriate.

This is a situation that was never envisaged by those who created our Constitution. A drastic problem clamours for a drastic remedy and we request you, as our President, to initiate the inquiry process as promptly as possible.

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APPENDIX :  
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1. 'KGB paid Congress, CPI, media'
http://www.indianexpress.com/full_story.php?content_id=78398

2. 'KGB moles infiltrated Indira's PMO'

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/msid-1234437,curpg-1,fright-0,right-0.cms>

3. Mitrokhin Archive II , India related pages : <http://intellibriefs.com/mitrokhin>

4. Demystifying Mitrokhin <http://intellibriefs.blogspot.com/2005/09/demystifying-mitrokhin.html>

5. Govt must explain KGB disclosures

http://www.dailypioneer.com/foray1.asp?main_variable=SUNDAYPIONEER%2FBACKBONE&file_name=bkbone2%2Etxt&counter_img=2

6. 'KGB officer posing as a black-marketeer' trapped Indian diplomat • CPI front made 'Rs 3 million' a year • IB infiltrated :

http://www.indianexpress.com/full_story.php?content_id=78723&headline=KGB~officer~trapped~Indian~diplomat,~CPI~made~'Rs~3~million'~a~year

7. 'India was a model of KGB infiltration'

http://www.indianexpress.com/full_story.php?content_id=78733&headline='India~was~a~model~of~intelligence~infiltration

8. KGB paid 343 Indians: Swamy

<http://deccan.com/Nation/NationalNews.asp?#KGB%20paid%20343%20Indians:%20Swamy>

9. Indira's India and the KGB <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/printFriendly/0,,1-1461-1782367-1461,00.html>

10. Casey, William J. "Soviet Use of Active Measures." Current Policy 761 (Nov. 1985). Address by DCI Casey to the Dallas Council on World Affairs, Dallas, Texas, 18 September 1985.

http://clark.cam.muskingum.edu/russia_folder/russiad&d_folder/russiad%26dcasey.html

11. KGB Documents

a) Request from COMMUNIST PARTY of India for money exchange.

psi.ece.jhu.edu/~kaplan/IRUSS/BUK/GBARC/pdfs/com-com/ct232-80.pdf

b) Publishing equipment for COMMUNIST PARTY of India.

psi.ece.jhu.edu/~kaplan/IRUSS/BUK/GBARC/pdfs/com-com/sovmin-83.pdf

c) KGB assistance to organising Demonstration before American Embassy in India in

1969 psi.ece.jhu.edu/~kaplan/IRUSS/BUK/GBARC/pdfs/terr-wd/isr69-1.pdf

d) Payment of \$500,000 in 1980 . Communist party of India in 1980; P230/34 ,
December 29, 1980;
<http://www.2nt1.com/archive/pdfs/com-com/int80-5.pdf>

12. KGB Active Measures in India

http://intellit.muskingum.edu/russia_folder/pcw_era/sect_16a.htm#KGB_India

13. INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Report into the Security and Intelligence Agencies' handling of the information provided by Mr Mitrokhin <http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm47/4764/4764-03.htm#gen10>

Sincerely,

The [Demand for Commission of Inquiry to expose KGB agents in India](#) Petition to President of India was **created by and written by Concerned Indian Citizens** (radhikasingh70@yahoo.com). This petition is hosted here at www.PetitionOnline.com as a public service. There is no endorsement of this petition, express or implied, by [Artifice, Inc.](#) or our sponsors. For technical support please use our simple [Petition Help](#) form.

[Send this to a friend](#)

If you are an Indian citizen, this is something you must sign, and circulate to others to sign.
<http://new.petitiononline.com/kgbindia/petition.html>

Also read

<http://www.samachar.com/features/290905-features.html>

Does Cong want to perpetuate Nehru-Gandhi dynasty? By M.V.Kamath

It was always well known that the KGB had funded the congress and the commies

What is shocking is that the KGB actually spent only a few million dollars a year for this control. Central ministers willing to spy for just \$50000. What is shocking is not that Indian politicians are whores, but rather they are cheap whores and street walkers. Given that the church is pumping in 1000 times the money that the KGB is pumping in, I shudder to think. of the penetration of the Indian govt by the Church, China and Saudi Arabia -GS

Politicians in India have been selling India to other nations for free. The great Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi was running recruitment campaign for British military in India during WW I...i.e. was offering Indians as cannon fodders to get his feet in indian politics at a time when Indians were taxed to death and looted to penury by the same Britain. Naturally, he was opposed to Subhash Chandra Bose etc, who were determined to get British government out of India....with support of same Indians whom Gandhi was recruiting. Nehru was in awe of China and gave up India's military posts in Tibet, WITHOUT any money. He implemented disastrous economic policy that kept India in

third world for more than half century. He did not charge any money for that either from USSR or from USA. When we have ideals like such Bapu and such Chachas, it is not surprising that later breed of Indian politicians sold India for cheap. In fact, I can be happy to find that unlike the godfather they charged some money for that. –a comment

Who paid our politicians and bureaucrats for not purchasing a single airplane for the last 11 years. Is it Dawood who started the Jet Airways or the Dubai Sheikh who runs the Emirates Airlines? Why India delayed the starting of the Duty free shops in Indian airports, while that in Dubai was minting money? Five times the TDP leader Chandrababu Naidu went to Dubai, ask Why? Kerala CM Oommen Chandy wants a terrorist who is in jail in TN for the Coimbatore blast, to be released. For the last 8 years a Christian foreigner is in India on business visa and converted lakhs Hindus and it is going on merrily in spite of he was served deportation orders. Nalini Chidambaram who is the wife of FM P.Chidambaram is his lawyer. Conversion in India is going on in the most illegal manner with inducement and I am told that the Christians are giving the bra and fancy underwear for the ladies to convert. Probably the next cheapest way to convert is by offering sanitary pads for the poor ladies in the villages. Manmohan Singh had permitted the Pakistani bank BCCI, to open a branch in Bombay in 1983. BCCI was a drug running, money laundering terrorist funding ISI bank, and against our RAW advises Manmohan while he was the RBI governor permitted the Bank to open a branch in India. BCCI later collapsed with a loss of \$16 billion. BCCI also given money to Indira Gandhi alias Maimuna Begum. Can you ask what Manmohan has got in return? It cannot be the foreign scholarship his daughter has got as it could be a cheap return for him from BCCI which even funded the Pakistani nuclear programme. Even a Judge like J.W.Singh has to look for the help of Dawood for Justice as our system is deteriorated beyond repair.-N.Krishna